Numb. 2.

A Paraphraſe upon Rev. I.

The Plain Meaning of the Firſt Chapter of the **Revelation**, *ſet forth in way of Paraphraſe, and Notes. Being alſo an Exhortation, not to Reſt in the Literal Senſe of the Epiſtles; but to ſeek out for ſuch a one, as may be Anſwerable to the Statelineſs of their Common Frontiſpiece,* **I Know Thy Works.**

Line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little, Eſay. XXVIII. 10, 13. *Which things are an Allegory,* Gal. IV. 14.

THE Reader is here ſuppoſ'd to have had a ſight of the former Sheet; where I explain the three firſt Verſes; and ſo I proceed to the Buſineſs in hand; which is,

A Paraphraſe upon Rev. 1.

V. 1. The Revelation, whereof *Jeſus Chriſt* is Author; as God, and not as Man; for no Man is Capable of ſuch Fore-knowledge; The Main End, and Scope of it being this, *viz.* To Fore-ſhew unto His Servants ſome things of Great Importance, near approaching; to wit, Thoſe Things, which in the XXI, and XXII Chapp. are ſaid to have bin Shewed to *John*, by one of the Vial-angels. The ſame *Joh.* who V. 2. has Recorded the Doctrin, and Miracles of *Jeſus Chriſt*; and was himſelf a Preſent Witneſs of them. V. 3. Now, for Encouragement to the Studious of theſe Myſteries, Bleſſed is he that Interpreteth (ſaith the Spirit) and they that attend to the words of This Prophecy; and Live anſwerably; and Obſerve the wonderful Workings of God's Providence, in bringing to paſs the ſaid great Things Predict d in it: For the Time of their Accompliſhment is Now at hand: it being the latter end of the Vial-times, which the Revelation chiefly addreſſes to; before which Times it could not be rightly Underſtood, and in reſpect of which Only, it is properly call'd a *REVELATION*. Notes. Obſerve here, that although the Bleſſedneſs may after a ſort be ſo interpreted as to belong to the Reader even of the Literal ſenſe of this Prophecy; there being many Excellent things, appearing in its very Superfice: yet thoſe words [*for the time is at Hand,*] which are aſſign'd as the Reaſon of the Bleſſedneſs, cannot be applied, but only with regard to the Myſtical, or Prophetic ſenſe of it. But here we are to note alſo, That the Viſions of this Book begin at V. 9. All before that, is but a *Preface*, containing the Title; the Author; the main Scope and Deſign;

the Scribe; the Benefit of Reading it. All which are compris'd in the 3 firſt verſes. Afterwards, as *John* had receiv'd a Commandment at V. 11. to write what he had ſeen, (or ſhould ſee) and ſend it to the Churches &c. ſo, in the 4th verſe, he begins his Epiſtle to them, in theſe words; V. 4. John *to the ſeven Churches which are in Aſia, Grace be unto you, and peace, from God*, who in theſe Viſions has bin repreſented to me, under the Title of, *Which is and Which was, and Which is to come*, Chap. 4. 8. 16. 5. and from the Holy Ghoſt, who has bin Repreſented to me, as *Seven Spirits before the Throne of God*, Chap. 4. 5. Notes. One Church, conſider'd as divided into Seven Intervals, is repreſented in this Prophecy, as ſeven Churches: juſt as One Empire, for the like reaſon, is ſet forth as Seven Beaſts, or Empires, Chap. XVII. For that Empire, under its ſixth Head, is repreſented as a Dragon; Chap XII. 3. under its ſeventh, as a Leopard, &c. Chap XIII. 2. So a Book, with One Seal, (conſiſting of One Continued Myſtery all along) is call'd Chap. V. 1. a Book with 7 Seals. Becauſe the Book is there Conſider'd, as Divided into Seven Parts. And in like manner, the Miniſters of the Church who in this Prophecy, are Uſually call'd the Angel of it; if the Church it ſelf be conſider'd as Divided into ſeven Intervals (or Churches) are call'd Seven Angels. Theſe Angels are alſo called Spirits, Chap. 4. 5. V. 6. And as the Lamb is ſometimes Chriſt, and ſometimes his Church (*ſee my Notes on Chap.* 4. 9.) and the Sitter on the Throne, ſometimes God, and ſometimes the King; according as the ſenſe Directs; ſo a ſpirit is ſometimes the Miniſters of the Church, and ſometimes the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, under whom they Miniſter; who has conſtituted them his Overſeers, and who acts in them and, by them. Laſtly, as one Church is 7 Churches; one Angel, ſeven Angels; ſo, one Spirit is *ſeven Spirits*, according to the ſeven-fold Diviſion of the Church, in which he is. And whereas theſe ſeven Spirits are ſaid to be *before* the Throne, which argues them to be *Miniſtring* Spirits: it will come all to one, if we underſtand them of the Holy Ghoſt (as I have ſaid) conſider'd as the Actuater, and the influencer of his Miniſters; that is, as making good our Saviours Promiſe, that he ſhould Abide in, and with the Church for ever, *John.* 14. 16, &c. For God is repreſented no otherwiſe (according to the Myſtical ſenſe of this Prophecy) than as Ruling in and by ſome King; nor Chriſt, than as ſuffering, or Triumphing, in his Church; nor the Holy Ghoſt, than as Acting in his Miniſters.

V. 5. *And from Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Faithful Witneſs*; who laid down his Life for the Truth's ſake; and is Riſen again, as the Firſt-fruits of them that ſleep in him, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. and who, by his Faithful ſervants, has frequently done the ſame, as hath bin ſhewed me in theſe Viſions. Who, preſently after his Reſurrection became in his Own perſon, The Prince of the Kings of the earth; and in theſe Viſions has bin Exhibited as ſuch, in his Vicegerents on Earth, Chap. 22. 3, 4, 5. 21. 23, 24, 25, 26. *Unto him, who*, in his Own Perſon, *hath Loved us, and Waſhed us from our ſins in his own Blood:* V. 6. And, as hath bin ſhewed me in the following Repreſentations, hath (by the Miniſtry of Reformed Princes; and particularly, of thoſe of *England*) highly Honour'd us, both Laics and Clergy-Men, with great Power, and Large Revenues, to be employed in the ſervice of God, and his Father; and now no more, after the Reſtauration of the Church of *England*, to be taken from us; *To Him be Glory; and Dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.* Notes. The main Buſineſs of the Revelation, being to ſet-forth the Honour of Chriſt its

its Author, V.1. may be conceived as the Reaſon, why St. *John* ſingles Him out from the other Perſons of the Trinity; contenting himſelf with a Bare Mention of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and expreſly aſcribing Glory and Dominion to Chriſt only; a thing very well worth our Obſervation. For this is well accommodated to the Buſineſs in hand; which is, *per varios caſus, & Diſcrimina*, to bring us in the End, to that moſt Glorious, and moſt Deſirable Eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's Eternal Kingdom in the world. Chap. XXI, and XXII. and withall, to aſſure us of our Saviour's Divinity. With relation to which things (to wit, the Kingdom of Chriſt on earth, and his Equality with the Father,) we are alſo to underſtand the next two verſes; thus.

V. 7. *Behold, he* is Coming ſpeedily, in his Choſen ſervant, to take Vengeance of his Enemies; attended with a great Retinue. His Glory ſhall be very Manifeſt Then to Every body; even to thoſe that had a hand in his Own, or in any of his ſervants Death; to His, and their Perſecutors, and Murderers. And it ſhall be matter of Remorſe to all Earthly, Senſual, and Degenerate Profeſſors; that ever they, or their Fathers, had bin concern'd in any ſuch Injurious, and Deſtructive Practices. They ſhall then Repent, and give Glory to God by their Unfeigned Converſion. And ſo the Tyranny of Antichriſt ſhall be Aboliſhed, and the Kingdom of Chriſt Eſtabliſht in the World. *Even ſo. Amen*; ſays every Pious Soul. Notes. The Subjects of *Rome* being noted by *Waters*, Rev XVII. 15. the *Regnant* Part is left to be underſtood by the *Earth*; which, like an Iſland, Overlooketh, Preſideth over or (as the Spirit himſelf there expreſſeth it) ſitteth upon thoſe Waters. And thus is that Type of *Earth* conſtantly taken wherever it occurs, throughout the Prophecy. And we may Obſerve alſo, That as this verſe has Relation to the Kingdom of Chriſt on Earth: ſo the Next, as has bin ſaid, is a Declaration of his Divinity, according to the Letter; and of his Never-ceaſing Care of his Church, according to the ſpirſtual meaning of it. Thus,

V. 8. I am that Very God, to whom belong all Titles of Honour to Him aſcribed by the Ancient Prophets. More particularly, with reſpect to my Church, *I am Alpha, and Omega; the the Beginning, and the Ending*; *ſaith the Lord* Jeſus Chriſt *compare V.* 11, 13, 17, 18. *the Firſt, and the Laſt* (a Title, by the Prophet *Eſay*, Appropriated to the only True God, that is to Me; for *he ſaw my Glory, and ſpake thoſe words of Me*) *which is, and which was and which is to come, the Almighty*, And accordingly, as will be ſeen evidently from the following Viſions, I continue with my Church (as I have promiſed them) throughout All Ages. *Mat.* XXVIII. *ult.* Notes. Theſe verſes hitherto we are to look upon, as the *Preface*; ſetting forth the Main Scope of the Book; and particularly Inſiſting on the Chief Viſion of all. Which had alſo bin repreſented to the Prophet Laſt. from Chap. XXI, 9. &c. to the end of the Revelation; and which, for both thoſe Reaſons (to wit, both as the Laſt, and the Chiefeſt,) may well be conceiv'd to have left the ſtrongeſt Impreſſion on his Mind, and to have lien Uppermoſt in his Meditations; when (having bin a Spectator of the whole ſcene) he came to ſend an account of it, according to Order, to the ſeven Churches. The following verſes to the 11th are a Plain Declaration of ſome Circumſtances, relating to St. *John's* Receiving the Viſions; and of great Uſe for our Underſtanding the meaning of them. Eſpecially that Circumſtance of his being in the Iſle of Patmos as will appear by and by.

V. 9. I John *who alſo am your Brother and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of* Jeſus Chriſt, *was in the Iſle that is call'd Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony of* Jeſus Chriſt. Which my Deſolate, and Diſconſolate Condition (as an Inſtance of his Tender Care over All that are Afflicted for his ſake) he was pleaſed to make an Opportunity of imparting Great and Glorious Myſteries to me, in the following manner.

V. 10. *I* was in a Rapture, or Ecſtaſy, on a certain Sunday, of all the days in the week; which the Lord will have to be obſerved in a peculiar manner and to be employed to his own Honour, in holy Exerciſes, and Meditations; *and I heard behind me, a great Voice as of a Trumpet* (reſembling the Voice of the Miniſters of Chriſt, *Eſay.* LVIII. 1.) *Saying* I *am Alpha, and Omega; the Firſt, and the Laſt*; the Church before the Reformation, and the Church Reformed: *and what thou ſeeſt, write in a Book, and ſend it unto the Seven Churches, which are in Aſia: unto Epheſus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamus, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

V. 12. And being thus poſited in the Iſle of *Patmos*, and turning the Eyes of my Mind, as directed by the Bare ſound of the words, towards *Aſia*; I could not perceive the Voice, that ſpake to me. For which cauſe it was, that the Voice ſpake *Behind* me: that thereby I might be obliged to turn my Mind Weſtward, towards *Rome*. by which was intimated to me (and in Me, to Every Reader of the following Epiſtles. That there are Two Senſes of the Name of Every Church; the One Litteral, which is the Fore right ſenſe: and the Other *Myſtical*; which ſounds *Behind* us as it were; ſo that we muſt Turn our Imagination from the Letter, ere we can Diſcern the True Purport of the Epiſtles. The ſame thing, which is alſo ſignified in the Sealed Book by the writing *within* the Book, (which could not be read without Unſealing the Book;) and the writing on the *Back ſide*, Obvious to Every eye, Rev. 5. 1. Wherefore being thus Turned towards *Rome*, I perceived what I lookt for; to wit, an Appearance of ſeven Golden Candleſticks; of *Aſia*, a very Faint Reſemblance [*as may appear from All accounts that are given of the Epiſtles in the Literal way*;] but of the Church of *Rome* conſider'd as Divided (after the Cuſtom of this Prophecy in other Caſes) into ſeven Intervals, a moſt Bright, and Lively one. Notes. This I hope to make appear by the following Expoſition. Only we may obſerve, that as the *Empire* of *Rome* is ſet forth by the Myſtical name of *Babylon*, Chap. XVII. ſo the *Church* of Rome here, by the Churches of *Aſia*. And as the Myſtical *Babylon* has ſome Reſemblance to the Real one: ſo, no doubt, the Myſtical Churches of *Aſia*. to their Prototypes. So that the Epiſtles may be accommodated to the Real Churches of *Aſia*, after a ſort; (and as the Viſion Rev. XVII. may be to Real *Babylon*;) but there appears no Life nor Spirit in them, til they are applied to the Myſtical Churches.

V. 13. *And in the midſt of the Seven Candleſticks*, I ſaw the Lord Jeſus repreſented in the Form of the Rulers of his Church, his Immediate Miniſters, and Vicegerents; from the Beginning to the ending; which we are to conſider, as an Exemplification of the Title he had juſt before aſſum'd, of being *the Firſt, and the Laſt*. In which, the firſt thing that offer'd it ſelf was his ποδηρη [*as the Septuagint calls one of the Prieſtly Habits, Exod.* XXVIII. 4.] *a Long Garment down to the foot*; implying that the Government of the Church of *Rome*, and Inſpection and Care of the Faithful in that Communion, from firſt to laſt ſhould be (for the far greateſt part)

in

in the hands of Prieſts, next under Chriſt. And thoſe, Grave, Ancient Men; agreeing to the Repreſentation of the *Head* and *Hair* of the Apparition, which *were White like Wool, as White as Snow. And his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire*, burning with Zeal againſt Idolatry: (compare *Deut.* XIII. 8. *Acts.* XVII. 16. *Pſ.* LXXIX. 5. &c.) which was the great Offence, that ſtill exercis'd the Patience of the Faithful all along; till in the Latter times of that Church, (for *Rome* is not reckon'd as a Church. in this Prophecy, after the Reformation) which are ſignified by the *Feet* of this Appearance (for which, comp. *Dan. II.* 33. &c.) Burning the ſervants of Chriſt alive, became the Stated Revenge of their Oppoſing Idolatry. And therefore were the *Feet* of the Son of Man repreſented *like unto Fine Braſs, as if they burned in a Furnace, and his Voice was as the ſound of many Waters*; that is, Peoples, and Nations; of which the Church of *Rome*, the great Metropolis of the Empire, all along (but eſpecially ſince the *Conſtantinian* Revolution) has conſiſted. V. 16 And by Miracles, & Signs and Mighty Deeds, and Extraordinary Providences, as with his *Right Hand*, he ſtill Supported his Faithful ſervants, the Preachers of his Word; and, for the more effectual Enlargement of his Kingdom, raiſ'd up Emperors, and other Potentates, to joyn their Temporal Power, with the Spiritual of his Prieſts; which, like a Two-edged ſword, might Cut Both ways. And the ſplendor of his Countenance (whereby he brought Men under his Obedience, *Acts.* IX. 3. 4. XXVI. 13. 14. *Pſal.* LXVII. 1, 2. and ſignifies here, the Light of his Glorious Goſpel) *was as the Sun ſhineth in his Strength.* Which being both the Uppermoſt (or. Firſt) part of the Image; and yet the Laſt thing I was directed to take Notice of; as a ſign, That it ought to be referr'd, both to the Firſt and Laſt Times of the Church ſignified by the Image: to wit, That as ſhe was at firſt Converted (and Particularly, her firſt Biſhop St. *Paul*) by ſuch a Glorious Light; ſo ſhe ſhould be at Laſt Reform'd by ſuch a nother, Spiritually underſtood. Notes. The Right Hand of God is uſed in Scripture, 1. For Gods Miraculous Power, (*Exod.* XV. 6. *Acts.* ii. 33. V. 31.) 2. For Regal Power, God's Peculiar Bleſſing, and Direction, (*Iſal.* XVII. 7. XVIII. 5. *Rev.* V. 1.) 3. For Both; (*Pſal.* XLIV. 3. LXXVIII. 54.) And thus alſo Chriſt, or any Good King, that fights his Battels, may be call'd *The Man of* God's *Right Hand*, *Pſal.* LXXX. 17. wherefore, by its Place in the Image before us; where *the Voice*, as the ſound of *many Waters*, on the one ſide, has a Manifeſt Aſpect upon the Mighty Encreaſe of the Church of *Rome*, upon *Conſtantine's* coming to the Empire; and the Two-edged Sword on the other ſide, to the Two-fold Power, that the Church thereby attain'd; I cannot but think, that the *Right-Hand* ought to be referred Principally, to that Notable Deliverance of the Church, by *Conſtantine* the Great; and to the Favour of many Pious Princes afterwards, conſequent thereupon; who ſhew'd themſelves Nurſing Fathers to the Family of *Chriſt*.

V. 17. Whereupon *I fell at his Feet as Dead*; and was therein a Type of the Reformation; that is, of thoſe, who by the Zealous Preaching of *Wickliff*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, and many other Godly Miniſters of the Goſpel (the Light of Learning alſo breaking out with a ſurprizing Luſtre at the ſame time [illegible] were brought-off to Purity of Religion, from the Romiſh Superſtitions. Notes. The *Feet* of Chriſt are very fitly ſet to denote the Stanch Stable, and ſuffering part of his Church, by reaſon of that Ancient Prediction which they manifeſtly allude to, concerning the Serpents bruiſing the ſeed-of-the-Womans Heel, Gen. III.

15.

15. Now there is in this Hieroglyphic, a three-fold mention of Chriſt's *Feet*. One, in the ποδήρης, or Garment down to the *Foot*; in the Firſt part of the Deſcription. Which may be referr'd to the Apoſtles St. *Peter*, and St. *Paul*. the Baſis or *Foundation* of this Church of *Rome*; as the Apoſtles are call'd *Eph.* ii. 20. The next, juſt after the Deſcription of his Fiery (or Jealous) Eyes; which is very appoſitely ſeconded with that of his *Feet, like unto Fine Braſs, as if they burned in a Furnace*. For they that could not endure to ſee the True God diſhonoured by Idolatry, were ſure to be caſt into a Burning Fiery Furnace. This therefore ſignifies the Fiery Trials of that Church, both before *Conſtantine*, and alſo before the Reformation. It ſignifies thoſe before *Conſtantine*, by vertue of its place in the Deſcription. For it is follow'd by that Voice like the ſound of many Waters; which refers (as has bin obſerved already) to that Vaſt Augmentation of the Churches Numbers, made by *Conſtantine's* coming to the Roman Throne. which Advancement of his came juſt to Cloſe-up the Hotteſt of all the Ten Perſecutions. And it ſignifies alſo the Perſecutions, that immediately Preceded the Reformation, in vertue of the place that the *Feet* have in the Body; which is the Laſt, and Loweſt of all; whereby are ſignified the Laſt times of that Church, that is repreſented by the Image, *Dan.* ii. 33. The third mention of Chriſt's *Feet*, is in the words we are now upon; to wit, next after that of the Glorious Light, whereby the Reformation was effected. When I ſaw his Countenance ſo exceeing bright and dazling, *I fell* (ſaies the Prophet) *at his Feet as dead*. Whereby is implied, That the Reformation was to be brought in immediately upon that horrid Burning of the Faithful, in Queen *Mary's* days, for their conſtant Profeſſion of the Faith. Which is here expreſſed by the *Feet of Chriſt like fine Braſs, as if they Burned in a Furnace*. And he laid his Right hand upon me, that is, And by the Miniſtry of Kings (particularly of the *Engliſh*) he laid, as it were, his Right hand upon me [*ſee the Notes on the former verſe*;] and bid me *not* ſo *Fear*; for He would certainly ſtand by me in the Profeſſion of his Holy Truth. For (ſays he again to me) *I am the Firſt and the Laſt*; am Preſent with my Church throughout All Ages; both with the Primitive, and the Reformed; both with the Church of *Rome* and with the Church of *England*, &c. *I am he that liveth, and was dead*, both in my own Perſon, and in the King and Church of *England*, Chap. V. 6. *and behold I am* now *alive* again in both reſpects *for evermore* (it being not poſſible, that either I, or the ſaid Church, ſhould ſuffer Death again a ſecond time) *Amen*; *And have the Keys of Hell and of Death*, whereby I am empour'd to deſtroy all Enemies; and am now about to put in uſe the Power, I am inveſted with. Notes. Theſe Keys are an Emblem of Chriſt's Kingdom which when he comes to ſettle in the world, he brings *in his hand the Key of the Bottomleſs Pit*; to *ſhut Satan up into it*, that he may no longer have his Liberty, to deceive the world. Chap. XX. 1, 3. And thus we ſee in this Hieroglyphic, a Notable Repreſentation of the Church (and of the Lord Jeſus in it, and with it) all along, from Firſt to Laſt. In the Church of *Rome* firſt; and, upon her Rejection (whereof more, in the Epiſtle to *Laodicea* ſee alſo Rom. XI. 20, 21, 22.) in the Church of *England*. But here we may obſerve, That the Condition of the Primitive Church, is ſet forth by a viſible Repreſentation: but that of the Reformed Church, by Speech. Upon which it may be fit to Note, That St. *John* conſtantly repreſents a Member (one or more,) of the Reformed Church and conſequently,

quently, is never found, either to ſpeak, or to be ſpoken to, but only in the Times of the Reformation. Inſtances we have, Chap. IV. 1. V. 5. VI. 3, 5, 7. VII. 13. X. 8. and in many other places. If it be Objected, That the Epiſtles deſcribe the Fates of the Primitive Church and yet are *Dictated* to St. *John*, every word of them: I anſwer, True; but then, Obſerve withal, That the *Dictator* himſelf (to whom all times are Preſent) firſt puts himſelf into the Times of the Reformation, before he ſpeaks a word. His *Voice* indeed is ſaid to have bin *as the Voice of many Waters* before: but no diſtinct Word was heard from him. The Epiſtles therefore are ſent, as from the Reformed Church to the Primitive; and contain the One's Cenſure of the Other, as it is drawn in their Writings. To which purpoſe again, is that of the Prophets Looking back, *Chap.* 1. 12. ere he could ſee the ſeven Candleſticks. For, as he had his Mind upon *Aſia* firſt (as is ſaid already) but was made by the Voice to turn himſelf towards *Rome*: ſo, as a Prophet, we are to ſuppoſe, that he had his mind upon Time to Come; but was Turn'd by the Voice to time Paſt. That is, At his firſt Entrance into his Prophetic Ecſtacy, being rapt into the Times of the Reformation, he could not ſee the Primitive Church of *Rome*, without Looking-back. And this is that which has bin already Intimated, from the firſt 3 verſes, That the Revelation, as a Prophecy, ſpeaks to the *Vial-times* only. Which Notion, if it ſeem a little hard at firſt to comprehend; I pray, How can you expect, but that ſome ſhould do ſo? Get over it therefore for the preſent, with as little Prejudice as you can. The Reſt are Eaſier; and at laſt will make This Eaſier alſo; nay, a little Time will put it paſt all Queſtion.

V. 19. In the end, with reference to the buſineſs I was call'd to, he added theſe words, *Write the things which thou haſt ſeen*, every thing as ſoon as thou haſt ſeen it [*Compare Chap* X. 4. XIV. 13. XIX. 6. XXI. 5.] both This Viſion that thou haſt ſeen already, and thoſe that are to follow: concerning the Affairs both of the Church of thy own times, and from thence to the Reformation (for theſe, we muſt note, are the words of an Interpreter, and not of one that has a Part in the Repreſentation; and therefore are to be underſtood Plainly, of the Real Time then Preſent) and Write alſo the State of the Reformed Church (which is call'd *Chap.* IV. 1. *Things that muſt be Hereafter.*) *The Myſtery of the ſeven ſtars, which thou ſaweſt in my Right-hand, and of the ſeven Golden Candleſticks. The ſeven Stars are the Angels*, or Miniſters, *of the Seven Churches*; *and the Seven Candleſticks, which thou ſaweſt, are the Seven Churches.* Notes. From hence again it appears, That the Epiſtles are Myſtical. For Why elſe are *Candleſticks* put for Churches; and *Stars*, for Miniſters, if every thing elſe be Plainly to be underſtood? And why in plain Epiſtles ſo formal, and Unheard-of an Interpretation of Two words (not very Difficult of themſelves neither) but to warn us, That thr Epiſtles are not written in the Vulgar Stile; but are all of a Piece with what is thus Explained; and to Oblige us, not to take up with the Bare Letter, where a Convenient Expoſition can be given in another way? Laſtly, Do but read the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, St. *James*, St. *Peter*, St. *John*, or St. *Jude*, and compare them with theſe here before us: and you will not ſtick to ſay (or think at leaſt) That if there be no ſenſe of theſe Epiſtles, but the Literal, they are not without reaſon Plac'd the Laſt in the Sacred Volume. Let us ſee then, What may be made of them in the Myſtical, or Allegorical way; called alſo ſpiritual. *Chap.* XI. 8. (where *Rome* is ſaid to be *Spiritually called Sodom, and Egypt*, and (the Place)

alſo where our Lord was Crucified, that is, Jeruſalem; not *Quatenus* the Holy City, but only *Quatenus* the Place *where our Lord was Crucified*. As much as to ſay, It is a ſort of Church indeed, but no Better a one, than this comes to. Let us ſee, I ſay, what may be made of the Epiſtles in this Spiritual ſenſe.) For, as for the Literal; notwithſtanding our Saviours ſo ſolemn Oſtentation of his Extraordinary Knowledg, at the beginning of Every Epiſtle, as if it would appear from the Diſcourſe it is prefixt to; I am confident, That no Man, from all the Literal Interpretations, that have yet come abroad, has form'd any better Opinion of our Saviours knowledg, than he had before; to ſay no worſe. For which very reaſon, Brethren, if there were no other, Let us be perſwaded to open our Eyes, and to look about us a little; and to ſeek for ſuch a ſenſe, and Candidly (when offer'd) to Embrace it, as may be apt to raiſe our Eſteem of that Divine Preſcience, which our Saviour we ſee, does ſo much in this Prophecy, and above all, in the Epiſtles, value himſelf upon; and to Convince every Good Chriſtian, That the Author of theſe Epiſtles has ſhewn a much larger Reach of knowledge in them, than is ſhewn in any of his Diſciples Epiſtolary Writings; and, that That Inſcription, *I Know Thy Works*, Promiſing ſomething very extraordinary; and for that purpoſe ſo Obſervably Plac'd in the moſt Conſpicuous Part, the very Front of every Epiſtle (an Ornament which the Literaliſts, for ~~what~~ of I find, could very well diſpenſe with) Deſerves the Place it is affixt to, and becomes it.

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